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10 April 1962

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

France: The 8 April French referendum gave De Gaulle the "massive" majority he sought for approval of his Algerian policy and condemnation of the OAS, but it was not the clear-cut vote of personal confidence which he had asked in order to carry out the broad foreign and domestic programs he plans. The 1.1 million invalid ballots may be a determining factor in De Gaulle's decision on whether to call immediately for new elections--a decision he is expected to make within two days. Most of these ballots were spoiled deliberately in response to the dissident Socialist Unity party's appeal that the voters thus indicate opposition to all but his Algerian policy. His intimation during the referendum campaign that a new era of presidential power is in prospect will help crystallize opposition to him in all the other parties except the Gaullist Union for a New Republic. In addition, De Gaulle must weigh a recent estimate made in the Ministry of the Interior that if elections were held soon, the Communist vote would total 6 million, as compared with 3.9 million in November 1958 when Gaullism was at its height and 5.5 million in the last national elections under the Fourth Republic, in 1956. [REDACTED]

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India: The new cabinet named by Nehru on 9 April indicates there has been little change in the balance of political forces within the Congress party. Most members of the 17-man cabinet, to be sworn in before the recently elected Parliament convenes on 16 April, are former ministers who have generally hewed closely to the line set by Nehru. The more

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influential politicians to the right and left of center have retained their key ministries. Moderately conservative Morarji Desai and S. K. Patil continue in charge of finance and of food and agriculture, respectively, while Krishna Menon retains the defense portfolio and leftist Minister of State K. D. Malaviya is elevated to full cabinet rank as Minister of Mines and Fuel. Menon will continue to serve as Nehru's unofficial adviser in foreign affairs and nuclear energy matters. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] (Backup, Page 3)

Situation Report--Sudan: General Abboud's military regime, which seized power in 1958, has managed to maintain itself despite long-standing rivalries among its leaders and pressure from political party leaders for a return to civilian government. Improving economic conditions, however, have prevented these politicians from building up a large and enthusiastic following. Factionalism in the army, now quiescent, could again become a problem. The government has failed to reconcile the Negroid, partly Christian tribes in the southern provinces to a government by Moslems. [REDACTED] (Backup, Page 5)

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Nehru Names New Cabinet

In the new cabinet Nehru, besides being prime minister, will also be in charge of foreign affairs and atomic energy matters.

Morarji Desai's hold on the number-two position in Nehru's government apparently remains firm, despite setbacks to his prestige during the past year. The 66-year-old finance minister is formally ranked second in seniority in the new cabinet list, assuming the position long held by former Home Minister Pant before his death in 1961. Desai, most prominent figure among the more conservative, entrenched elements in the Congress party, recently has chaired cabinet and party meetings in Nehru's absence and has for some time been regarded as the prime minister's most likely successor. Desai's personal relations with Nehru, however, have always been somewhat cool, and the prime minister thwarted Desai's premature attempt last summer to gain formal designation as the party's deputy leader in Parliament.

Excluding the close personal relationships with Nehru enjoyed by Krishna Menon and by the prime minister's influential daughter, Indira Gandhi, the member of the "inner cabinet" most favored by Nehru as a senior and loyal lieutenant is L. B. Shastri, who continues in the vital post of home minister. Despite Shastri's popularity and effectiveness as party troubleshooter, his dubious health and lack of strong political ambition take him out of the running for the succession, except as an interim or compromise candidate.

Patil and Malaviya will continue to function as the anchor men of the right and left wings of the cabinet, respectively. Patil has performed creditably in the politically risky Food and Agriculture Ministry and is an outspoken advocate of close cooperation with the United States. Malaviya has made his reputation as mines and fuel minister by promoting economic aid agreements

with Moscow, particularly in the oil field, and by supporting bloc positions in general.

C. Subramaniam, 52-year-old former finance minister in the Madras State government, is the only new face in the cabinet, despite Nehru's reported desire for "new blood" in the high command. Appointment of the highly touted Subramaniam to the newly created portfolio of Steel and Heavy Industries will improve direction in a field which is vital to the success of India's planned industrialization. The new grouping reflects the changed emphasis within India's iron and steel industry from extraction--formerly grouped with Mines and Fuel--to production and manufacture. Swaran Singh, former minister of Steel, Mines, and Fuel, has been shifted to the large Railway Ministry, where his managerial skills and broad background in industry should compensate for his predecessor's deficiencies in meshing the overworked railways with the requirements of a growing industrial economy. [REDACTED]

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Situation Report: Sudan

Opposition to the Abboud military regime has centered in a group of politicians led by the Imam of the influential Ansar religious sect. Last July--prior to his trip to the USSR--General Abboud arrested 12 of the opposition leaders as a security precaution. They were released in January with a stern warning to cease all political activity or face re-arrest. They have since been under heavy surveillance.

The government's decision to release the politicians appears to have been made at least in part as a result of developments within the Ansar. In October the head of the Ansar, Siddiq al-Mahdi, died and was replaced by his brother al-Haadi al-Mahdi, a religious conservative without political ambitions. Although al-Haadi vowed to continue Siddiq's policy of opposing the military regime, he has in fact followed a much more conciliatory line, and without the full backing of the Ansar tribes the opposition leaders cannot exert much pressure to obtain concessions from the government.

President Abboud has attempted to dilute opposition to his regime by taking cautious steps toward civilian participation in his government. Last December he announced the formation of a Committee on Constitutional Developments to study and make recommendations "regarding the composition and term of a partially elected central council." While this has failed to satisfy most of the opposition leaders, who want full restoration of parliamentary government, al-Haadi is apparently willing to allow the government time to implement its plan. Abboud is unlikely to go beyond this in the near future; he has repeatedly stressed the necessity of building a broad economic and social base before re-establishing parliamentary institutions.

25X1 [Meanwhile, a rift within the Supreme Council between pro-Egyptian Muhammed Talaat Farid and Deputy Commander of the Armed Forces Hasan Bashir Nasir has apparently reopened. Recent reports indicate that Farid may have convinced Abboud]

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[redacted] that Bashir Nasir since his appointment as deputy commander has been placing officers who are loyal to him personally in key posts, and that he now is in the position to head a coup. Abboud has reportedly transferred a number of these officers. A major shakeup in the army could cause a serious morale problem and would probably lead to a renewal of coup plotting among disgruntled elements [redacted]

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